2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Murawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] [626] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30a). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24d), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

[775] The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

● [767] [88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamuni* rituals.